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ANNUAL REPORT

OF THE

BOARD OF STATE HOUSE COMMISSIONERS,

MADE TO THE

GENERAL ASSEMBLY

AT ITS

JANUARY SESSION, 1898.

PROVIDENCE:
E. L. FREEMAN & SONS, PRINTERS TO THE STATE.
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State of Rhode Island and Providence Plantations.

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REPORT.

To the Honorable the General Assembly of the State of Rhode Island.

The Board of State House Commissioners beg leave to present their annual report in accordance with Chapter 1,201 of the Public Laws, as follows :

Since the last report of the board the work of constructing the state house has been steadily going on until the entire building is now up to the level of the cornice. With the money now at the disposal of the board the work can be continued to the first of July, next, after which time it must be discontinued unless a further appropriation is made.

On May 19, 1897, the General Assembly passed the following resolution:—

"WHEREAS, in said report said board invites 'an expression of what will be your policy in relation to providing funds for completing and furnishing the building,' therefore

Resolved, That the Board of State House Commissioners be, and they hereby are, directed to ascertain and report to the General Assembly at its next session what sum of money, in addition to the amount now under their control, will be required to finish the building with or without the dome and the tourelles, and without statuary or decorations, in the most economical manner, and furnish the same so that it can be used by the General Assembly and the several departments of the State. Also what length of time will probably be required to complete the building and furnish it in accordance with the plans that have been approved by said board."

In replying to this direction of the General Assembly the board would respectfully call your attention to a part of the report made last year to that body. "During the past year this board received from the Joint Special Commission, appointed by your honorable body 'to take into consideration and report upon the probable extraordinary expenditures of the State within the next five years for public buildings and such other public works as are now in process of construction and contemplated,' a request for such information as it was able to give in relation to the subject-matter of the commissioner's duties so far as the wants of this board were concerned."

In response to this inquiry of the Committee on the Revenue of the State, the board sent the following letter dated September 25, 1896:

"The estimates furnished us by the architects for the decoration and furnishing of the State House, and for the grading and ornamentation of the grounds, are as follows: 1st, terrace, $235,386.00; 2d, Smith street approaches, $61,616.00; 3d, Gaspee street approaches, $40,000.00; 4th, grading and tree planting, (200) trees, $7,500.00; 5th, curbing for fence, $51,692.00; 6th, boiler house and tunnel, $24,984.00; 7th, boilers, engines and dynamos, $28,310.00; 8th, electric wiring, switch boards, motors, &c., $25,000.00; 9th, finish of the building, including elevators, decorating, statuary, candelabra, electric light fixtures, carpets, &c., $600,000.00; total, $1,074,489.00.

In addition to this, it will require $600,000.00 more than has been appropriated for our use to pay for the building as contracted for and for the site, a total of $1,674,489.00.

It is not the intention of the Board to expend so large a sum as is estimated for the purpose named in the ninth item, and they feel that the sum of $1,500,000.00 in addition to what has already been appropriated will enable them to complete, furnish, and decorate the State House, in a manner fitting for such a monumental structure, to construct proper approaches to it, and to properly grade and beautify the grounds surrounding it."

It has never been the intention of this Board to expend any money for statuary or for elaborate decorations on the interior of the building.

Your Board further in said report said as follows:—

"The price for so much of the building as has been contracted for is, as before stated to you, $1,576,000.

This provides the building ready for occupancy, with the exception of the elevators, the electric wiring and lamps, a boiler-house with boilers and conduit to the State House, and the furniture.

The estimated expense for these matters is as follows:

For elevators	$13,000
For electric wiring and lamps	25,000
For boiler-house, boilers, conduit, etc.	30,000
For furniture	100,000
	$168,000

This, added to the contract price, makes the cost of the building furnished and ready for occupancy $1,744,000, without including the architects' fees.

It will require at least $600,000, in addition to the funds now subject to the orders of the Board, to complete the payments on the contract with Norcross Brothers, which, with the $168,000 given above, makes $768,000 that will be needed to put the building in a condition to be used for the purposes for which it is designed. This could probably be reduced to $568,000 by omitting for the present the construction of the dome and tourelles; but such a course would be an expensive one in the end, as the cost of taking down and putting up again the false work of the dome, and of putting on and taking off a temporary roof over the rotunda, together with the expense for interruption of the labors of the contractor and the extra cost of constructing the dome from the outside after the building is occupied, would probably amount to from $75,000 to $100,000.

The contractor has located here now all the apparatus necessary for the complete construction of the exterior of the building in the most economical manner, the plant for the sawing and polishing of the marble alone having required an outlay of over $75,000. Its removal and replacement here again cannot be done without a large expense, which will have to be made a part of the cost of construction."

These sums will finish the building ready for occupancy in the plainest and simplest manner and are estimated at the lowest possible cost.

These quotations from said report answer all the questions propounded excepting the last two, and in reply to those we would say: That two years will be required to complete the building and furnish it in accordance with the plans that have been approved by said Board, provided the money therefor is at the disposal of the Board.

Your Board most earnestly urge upon the General Assembly the appropriation of sufficient money to entirely complete the building. Not only will such a course be more economical, but will secure better workmanship. The amount, in their opinion, necessary to complete and properly lay out the grounds and the approaches, is $1,500,000.00.

The contracts now outstanding are, one with McKim, Mead and White for 5 per cent. of the cost of the building, on which fifty-nine thousand eight hundred ninety-four dollars and forty-one cents ($59,894.41) has been paid; one with Norcross Brothers for one million five hundred seventy-six thousand dollars ($1,576,000) on which seven hundred eighty-seven thousand two hundred fifty dollars and seventy-four cents ($787,250.74) has been paid, and one with Prof. C. H. Woodbridge for five per cent. of the amount expended for heating and ventilation, on which one thousand three hundred twenty dollars and sixty cents ($1,320.60) has been paid. The amount due on the contract with the Mosler

Safe Co. of seven thousand five hundred dollars ($7,500.00) has been paid.

There has been expended up to the date of this report the sum of $1,288,417.19, of which $400,607.01 is for land.

All of which is respectfully submitted.

BOARD OF STATE HOUSE COMMISSIONERS.

(Signed) HERBERT W. LADD.

President.

February 24, 1898.

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